

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 TRSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04  
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E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINT MP  
SUBJECT: MAURITIAN PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS: POST ELECTORAL  
ROUND-UP: DECEMBER 29

REF: PORT LOUIS 1139

SUMMARY: PMSD LEADER GAETAN DUVAL REVEALED TO THE PRESS DECEMBER 28 THE TERMS UNDER WHICH THE LABOR PARTY AND THE PMSD HAVE AGREED TO FORM A COALITION GOVERNMENT, WHICH WILL TAKE OFFICE BEFORE THE END OF THE WEEK. THE PMSD IS TO HAVE FOUR MINISTRIES. THE GOVERNMENT IS TO CARRY OUT THE CAMPAIGN PROMISES OF BOTH LABOR AND THE PMSD. THE 70 MEMBERS OF THE NEW ASSEMBLY WERE SWORN IN ON DECEMBER 28. THE MMM MEMBERS BOYCOTTED THE READING OF THE SPEECH FROM THE THRONE BY THE GOVERNOR GENERAL. THE SPEECH WAS MAINLY A REITERATION OF LABOR CAMPAIGN PROMISES. IN ADDITION, MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS WERE PROMISED FOR 1977 AND SUBSIDIES FOR THE POLITICAL PARTIES REPRESENTED IN THE ASSEMBLY. THE ASSEMBLY ADJOURNED

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AFTER ELECTING LABOR AND PMSD MEMBERS AS DEPUTY SPEAKER AND DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES. IT WILL NOT MEET AGAIN UNTIL MARCH 1, 1977, A DECISION THE MMM HAS DENOUNCED. END SUMMARY

2. MAURITIAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PMSD) LEADER GAETAN DUVAL DISCLOSED AT A PRESS CONFERENCE ON DECEMBER 28 THAT THE

GOVERNMENT TO BE FORMED BY PRIME MINISTER RAMGOOLAM WILL BE A COALITION OF THE LABOR PARTY AND THE PMSD. THE NEW GOVERNMENT, TO BE ANNOUNCED PRIOR TO DECEMBER 31, WILL INCLUDE FOUR PMSD MINISTERS AND ONE PMSD PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY. THE POST OF CHIEF WHIP MAY ALSO GO TO PMSD MEMBER MRS. HENRY, WHO IS DUVAL'S SISTER. DUVAL HIMSELF WILL REMAIN HEAD OF THE PMSD BUT WILL NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE GOVERNMENT.

2. DUVAL EXPLAINED THE TERMS OF THE COALITION AGREEMENT AS FOLLOWS. THE COALITION GOVERNMENT WILL CARRY OUT THE CAMPAIGN PROMISES OF BOTH THE LABOR PARTY AND THE PMSD, INCLUDING A 40-HOUR WORK WEEK, A GUARANTEED THIRTEENTH MONTH OF PAY FOR ALL WORKERS, AN INCREASE IN THE OLD AGE PENSION FROM RS. 80 TO RS. 100, RENT FREE HOUSING IN THE WORKERS' TOWNS, THE RESUMPTION OF MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS, AND THE CREATION OF A MUNICIPALITY FOR RODRIGUES ISLAND. ON THE BASIS THAT THIS WILL BE A TRANSITION GOVERNMENT OF VERY SHORT DURATION WITH NEW ELECTIONS SOON, DUVAL SAID THAT HIS PARTY HAD ASKED FOR THE STRICT MINIMUM OF MINISTRIES NEEDED TO SATISFY ITS SUPPORTERS. THE PMSD WILL OCCUPY THE MINISTRIES OF REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION, JUSTICE, HOUSING, AND A NEW MINISTRY FOR RODRIGUES ISLAND. THE PMSD ALSO INSISTED THE CHINESE COMMUNITY BE GIVEN GREATER REPRESENTATION, WHICH PROBABLY MEANS THAT THE POST OF ATTORNEY GENERAL WILL GO TO A DEFEATED CHINESE PMSD CANDIDATE. EXPLAINING THE PMSD'S DECISION TO JOIN A COALITION GOVERNMENT, DUVAL SAID THAT THE PURPOSE WAS TO REASSURE PEOPLE WHO HAD VOTED FOR THE PMSD AND TO PREVENT THEM FROM SUCCUMBING TO PANIC AND SELF-EXILE, WHICH WOULD HAVE GRAVE CONSEQUENCES FOR THE ECONOMY OF THE COUNTRY. THE DECISION WAS TAKEN, HE SAID, BECAUSE IT WAS THE ONLY WAY OF KEEPING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE COUNTRY OUT OF THE HANDS OF THE COMMUNISTS.

3. DUVAL STATED THAT IF A SINGLE MMM MEMBER CROSSES THE FLOOR TO JOIN THE LABOR GOVERNMENT, THE PMSD MEMBERS WILL IMMEDIATELY LEAVE THE COALITION. HE SAID THAT THE COALITION WHICH HAS BEEN ARRANGED WAS THE ONLY VIABLE ALTERNATIVE TO THE FORMATION OF A MMM GOVERNMENT, WHICH HAD TO BE AVOIDED AT ALL COSTS. A CRISIS HAD OCCURRED WHEN THE GOVERNOR GENERAL MADE CLEAR TO ALL THE PARTIES THAT IF PRIME MINISTER RAMGOOLAM WAS UNABLE TO FORM A GOVERNMENT WITH MAJORITY SUPPORT HE WOULD HAVE TO CALL ON THE MMM TO DO SO. DUVAL ACKNOWLEDGED THAT HE HAD MET WITH THE MMM LEADERSHIP BUT HE SAID THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE MEETING HAD BEEN TO TRY TO OBTAIN FROM THE MMM A GUARANTEE OF THE PERSONAL SECURITY OF PMSD SUPPORTERS. (THE PRO-LABOR PRESS SAYS IT DOUBTS THIS WAS THE REAL PURPOSE OF THE MEETING.) SPEAKING OF HIS OWN FUTURE, DUVAL SAID HE WOULD CONTINUE TO BE ACTIVE POLITICALLY AND WOULD REMAIN AS LEADER OF THE PMSD BUT HE DID NOT WISH TO PARTICIPATE IN THE GOVERNMENT. HE SAID

HE HOPED TO BE ABLE TO RETIRE FROM POLITICS SOON.

4. THE 70 MEMBERS OF THE NEW ASSEMBLY WERE SWORN IN ON DECEMBER 28 AND THE FIRST SESSION OF THE FOURTH ASSEMBLY FOLLOWED. CONTRARY TO RUMORS THAT SOME OF THE MMM MEMBERS WOULD REFUSE TO TAKE THE OATH OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE QUEEN, THEY ALL DID SO WITHOUT HESITATION. THE ONLY BUSINESS TRANSACTED AT THIS SESSION WAS THE ELECTION OF A NEW DEPUTY SPEAKER, JEEWOOLALL OF THE LABOR PARTY, AND A NEW DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES, REY OF THE PMSD. THE MMM CONTINGENT PROPOSES ITS OWN CANDIDATES FOR THESE POSTS AND IN EACH CASE LOST BY STRAIGHT PARTY-LINE VOTES OF 36 TO 34. THE SEATING ARRANGEMENT OF THE LABOR PARTY LEADERSHIP DISCLOSED THE NEW HIERARCHY OF THE PARTY, WHICH REMAINS UNCHANGED EXCEPT FOR THE ABSENCE OF THE DEFEATED CAM LEADER, SIR ABDOOL RAZACK MOHAMED. THE LABOR PARTY CHIEFS NOW RANK AS FOLLOWS: RAMGOOLAM, RINGADOO, BOOLELL, WALTER. THE ASSEMBLY SESSION WAS ADJOURNED AND IT WILL NOT MEET AGAIN UNTIL MARCH 1, 1977.  
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MMM LEADER BERENGER TOLD THE PRESS THAT HIS PARTY CONSIDERS THE POSTPONEMENT OF THE WORK OF THE NEW ASSEMBLY FOR TWO MONTHS TO BE A "SCANDAL AND ABUSE OF PUBLIC FUNDS" WHICH THE MMM WILL NOT FAIL TO DENOUNCE IN ITS PUBLIC MEETINGS.

5. THE MMM CONTINGENT BOYCOTTED THE SPEECH FROM THE THRONE READ TO MEMBERS OF THE ASSEMBLY AND ASSEMBLED DIGNITARIES BY THE GOVERNOR GENERAL AT NOON ON DECEMBER 28. BERENGER EXPLAINED THE BOYCOTT AS BEING IN RESPONSE TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE LABOR-PMSD COALITION GOVERNMENT, WHICH HE SAID WAS CONTRARY TO THE POPULAR WILL AND A "TRUE PROVOCATION" BECAUSE 84 PERCENT OF THE PEOPLE HAD VOTED AGAINST THE PMSD, WHICH RAMGOOLAM NOW PROPOSED TO PUT INTO THE GOVERNMENT. (THE MMM ALSO BOYCOTTED THE GOVERNOR GENERAL'S RECEPTION FOR THE NEW ASSEMBLY MEMBERS AT LE REDUIT.)

6. THE SPEECH FROM THE THRONE WAS MAINLY A REITERATION OF PROMISES MADE BY RAMGOOLAM'S LABOR PARTY DURING THE CAMPAIGN. CERTAIN NEW PROPOSALS WOULD APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN INCLUDED AT THE BEHEST OF THE PMSD, FOR EXAMPLE THE PROMISE THAT MUNICIPAL AND VILLAGE ELECTIONS WILL BE HELD IN 1977, AND THE CREATION OF A RODRIGUES DEVELOPMENT AGENCY AND A RODRIGUES MUNICIPAL COUNCIL. A COMMITTEE WILL BE NAMED TO STUDY THE IDEA OF PROVIDING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO THE POLITICAL PARTIES REPRESENTED IN THE ASSEMBLY. THE GOVERNMENT PLANS TO "CONSULT THE PEOPLE" ON THE QUESTION OF WHETHER MAURITIUS SHOULD BECOME A REPUBLIC WITHIN THE COMMONWEALTH. THE GOVERNMENT PROMISED TO DIRECT ITS EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE AND FOR EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF THE NATIONAL WEALTH. A "WORKERS CHARTER" WILL ASSURE PARTICIPATION BY WORKERS IN DECISION-

MAKING IN PRINCIPAL INDUSTRIES, AND A 40-HOUR WORK WEEK.  
SECONDARY AND UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IS TO BE MADE FREE, AND  
THERE WILL BE AN EXPANSION OF THE NUMBER OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS  
AS WELL AS THE UNIVERSITY AND THE MAHATMA GANDHI INSTITUTE.  
A NATIONAL HEALTH SCHEME WILL BE INTRODUCED. THE SICK AND  
THE UNEMPLOYED WILL RECEIVE SPECIAL ALLOCATIONS. A NATIONAL  
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TRANSPLANT AUTHORITY WILL UNDERTAKE THE IMPROVEMENT OF  
PUBLIC TRANSPORT. THERE WILL BE FREE PUBLIC TRANSPORT FOR  
THE AGED AND THE HANDICAPPED. CERTAIN BASIC FOODS WILL  
CONTINUE TO BE SUBSIDIZED IN ORDER TO FIGHT INFLATION.  
GOVERNMENT HOUSING AND LAND-ACQUISITION LOANS WILL BE MADE  
AVAILABLE AT 100 PERCENT.

7. COMMENTING ON THE SPEECH FROM THE THRONE. MMM LEADER  
BERENGER TOLD THE PRESS THAT IT GAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THE  
GOVERNMENT IS THINKING OF STAYING IN POWER FOR SEVERAL YEARS.  
HE SAID THE MMM WOULD OBLIGE THE GOVERNMENT TO CARRY OUT ITS  
PROMISES, ESPECIALLY IN THE AREAS OF MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS,  
THE 40-HOUR WEEK, FREE EDUCATION, UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION,  
AND PARTICIPATION OF WORKERS IN INDUSTRIAL DECISION-MAKING.  
BERENGER NOTED THAT THERE WAS NO MENTION OF LIFTING THE  
STATE OF EMERGENCY, DEMOCRATIZING THE MAURITIAN BROADCASTING  
CORPORATION, REFORMING EDUCATION, NATIONALIZATION, REDUCING  
THE COUNTRY'S DEPENDENCE ON SOUTH AFRICA, THE CREATION OF A  
SUGAR AUTHORITY, OR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A STATE  
CORPORATION TO REGULATE IMPORTS.

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## Message Attributes

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